

ISRAEL,
A
JUVENILE POEM.

BY
SERENA.

IN TWO VOLUMES.



ISRAEL,
A
JUVENILE POEM.

BY
K SERENA. *hand*

VOL. I.

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE
COUNTESS DOWAGER POWLETT.



BATH, PRINTED BY R. CRUTTWELL, FOR THE AUTHOR;
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SCATCHERD AND Co. AVE-MARIA-LANE, LONDON;
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ISRAEL

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VOL. I



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INTRODUCTION.

SOV'REIGN Supreme, to thee th' immortal lay,
Ethereal nations and all nature pay;
The unseen wonders of th' Almighty Sire
In realms of light, I leave to Gabriel's lyre;
If, shooting from his sphere, he would infuse
The theme celestial of his awful muse;
How first the globes upon thy finger hung,
And all th' angelic sons of morning sung!
But stretching vain her ardent flight on high,
Fancy's swift pinions sweep the nether sky;
And glancing o'er the various scenes in view,
Fain would her wing thy pathless ways pursue.

From earth's foundations, thy almighty sway
Decreed the night, and blest'd the smiling day:

Through chequer'd life, at best a barren wild,
 Thy hand paternal leads thy erring child
 O'er mountains drear, thro' storms and thorny way,
 Or flow'ry path, more dang'rous as more gay,
 Stems the wild torrents of the tide of woe,
 And breaks th' enchantments fancy paints below;
 A bitter day succeeds a sensual hour,
 And pleasure's votary trembles at thy power.

O'er the wide world thy piercing eye extends,
 Exalts the lowly, and the haughty bends:
 With past and future open to thy view,
 Thy awful thoughts thy boundless schemes
 pursue,
 Drop on th' allotted head the crown of state,
 And fix the monarch's irresistible fate;
 Give fame his triumphs to resound afar,
 Or sink him vanquish'd in disastrous war;
 Thy smiles uphold him, or thy threat'ning frown
 The sceptre wrests, and strikes the lofty down.
 To shift the scenery is thy will alone,
 Or set him safely on a firmer throne.

Thy secret counfels hide each future fate,
 And turn to peace contentions of the state;
 'Tis thy decree when mighty nations fall,
 And foes victorious but obey thy call;
 At thy dread nod tempestuous scenes arise,
 Shake the wide globe, and shock the peaceful skies;
 States leagued with states to add to human woe,
 Heav'n weeps to view—all hell exults below—
 Earth groans—whilst furious Ætna joins the fray,
 And down her steep the fiery torrents play.

Hid from the seat of war Britannia stands,
 Guarded, great pow'r! by thy extended hands;
 'Twas thy decree call'd forth her sons to wield
 The glitt'ring sword, and march the bloody field
 In distant climes—to foam in hottest fight,
 And mow down legions of the sons of might:
 Not one—one single of the warrior train,
 Thy voice forbidding, falls among the slain;
 The destin'd lives thy spreading hands surround,
 Nor give the pointed weapons force to wound:

When down the sky reſail the ſhades of night,
O'er heaps of ſlain the vanquiſh'd ſpeed their flight.

'Tis thine to give humanity to brave
The darkſome terrors of a ſanguine grave,
When death flies forward, and the laſt adieu
Of ſtruggling life is anguiſh to the view.
What tragic ſcene my doleful fancy paints!
Soft pity bleeds, and human nature faints.
The guardian genii of the human race
With quiv'ring pinions veil their ſadd'ning face;
Penſive they mourn the harden'd ſons of ſtrife,
Who ruſh on death, and loſe eternal life.

But yet that man who on thy pow'r relies,
Where duty calls with fearleſs vigour flies,
To guard his liberties—ſubmiſſive ſtill—
To live or die, obedient to thy will:
When ſudden wounds have caſt him 'mid the ſlain,
Upward he looks, and heav'n relieves his pain.
Releas'd by death without reflection's groan,
He ſwift obtains a ſhorter paſſage home.

Propitious Pow'r! may Britain be thy care,
 Nor the dire fate of Rome or Carthage share!
 Nor Pathros, where of old thy vengeance led
 Alternate plagues, and dried the Sea of Red.
 Whilst the loud trump an onset sounds from far,
 Protect her valiant sons from civil war!
 Turn the ferocious mind to gentle peace,
 With that dread voice which bids the tempest cease.
 Call forth man's pity for a brother's fate,
 And in this transient world forget to hate!
 Almighty Pow'r! the peaceful olive rear,
 And bid glad fame the friendly tidings bear;
 Let Gallia hear, let Europe's sons obey,
 And speed their legions from the general fray;
 Bid factions opposite their cause decline,
 And yield obedience to the laws divine.

If vengeful angels wait thy dread command,
 To strike our rebel coasts with righteous hand,
 Yet may bright mercy stay their angry flight,
 And marshal round the guardian hosts of light.

Give to our realms to rule wild ocean's wave,
Which East, West, South, and Northern shores
relaxe;

Bid the fierce north-wind Britain's sons befriend,
And swelling gales the sailors' wishes tend;
O'er the blue surface of the main they sweep,
And calm th' unruly clamours of the deep,
And waft from golden Ind with ready tide,
On Albion's coasts the lofty vessels ride.

Thy will decrees bright merit in the shade,
In heat of pow'r the choicest virtues fade;
Lifts up the proud to glitter 'mid the throng,
And gives the daring arm success in wrong;
The higher rais'd, thy great intents fulfill'd,
They lower fall, and all their honours yield:—
So on a rock, familiar with the skies,
Th' ambitious climb—a stranger to the wise;
Whilst down the cragg'd cliff—a horrid steep,
Foams with wild fury the tremendous deep;
Lashing the shores below, the troubled sea
Boils with impatience to devour the prey,

Who gazing long, till giddy with the height,
Whirling he falls engulph'd in endless night;
The waves receive him with a dashing roar,
Resounding distant on the woodland shore.

Almighty Pow'r! where female virtues shine,*
With liberal hand bestow thy gifts divine!
Th' exalted breast where Israel finds a friend
With fav'ring smiles and length of days attend.
Long may beneficence effusive flow,
And yield felicity in scenes of woe;
And to the martial sons of ancient line,
From warrior sprung, the meed of fame assign;
May deeds of worth to distant ages run,
And emulation fire each noble son.

Heav'n, earth, and seas, for Israel's good combin'd,
And friends and foes display'd the gen'rous mind!
So now may influence divine engage
Each heart to Abram's race in modern age.

* The noble Patroness of the Poem.

'Twas thy right hand my scriptur'd heroes crown'd
 With Memphian honours, and their acts renown'd;
 Thy great decree uprais'd the captive slave,
 And o'er his foes the joyful triumphs gave:
 So shall bright worth o'er sons of darknes sway,
 And stormy scenes give place to brighter day.

If when thou smitest with thy potent rod,
 Th' afflicted own the justice of their God,
 Then o'er their heads th' extension of thy wing,
 And lib'ral hand, unnumber'd blessings bring.
 When thou art wroth, the sons of earth will frown;
 When thy arm strikes, they tread the wretched
 down:

But when thy tender mercies banish woe,
 The world again the ready smiles bestow.

By converse, and submission to thy sway,
 Reason derives the all-enlight'ning ray;
 So the majestic empress of the night
 Draws from the radiant sun her cheering light:

So may each mind on earth unclouded shine,
 Imbibing, from perfection, joy divine;
 Then to thy sov'reign pow'r shall ev'ry tongue,
 Attun'd to praise, unite in endless song!



BOOK I.

CANTO I.

TO Canaan's land, where milk and honey flow,
Where fruitful vines and plenteous herbage grow,
A favour'd patriarch God's behests obey'd,
And from his native land of Chaldee stray'd:
For thus that voice, which bids the ocean roll,
Soft to his ear in midnight darkness stole:—

“ From hence to Canaan's fruitful spot ascend!
And heav'n's protection shall thy way attend:
Old as thou art, I will a son bestow;
And that fair land where fragrant spices grow,
There shall thy race, as stars unnumber'd, shine,
And num'rous nations rule with law divine;
O'er Edom, Basan, proud Amorians, sway,
And haughty Moab shall thy sons obey.”

The patriarch heard, and faithful to his God,
 Arose, obedient, wand'ring far abroad:
 From Chaldee to Euphrates' distant shores,
 Himself and fam'ly travell'd with their stores:
 The bending osiers from the willow broke
 Pliantly yielding to the artist's stroke,
 A vessel form'd compact, and firm the sides,
 Bear the rude beating of the ebbing tides;
 And wafted o'er, their journey they purfu'd,
 Which lay thro' Palmerina's deserts rude;
 And climbing o'er the bleak mountainous way
 Where heathen nations hold their savage sway,
 O'er Hermon's mount, directed by his God,
 The faithful father seeks repose abroad.
 From Gilead, trav'ling on to Sichem's land,
 He takes his son, the promis'd heir, in hand,
 And on the mountain of Moriah stood,
 Steady in faith to shed the stripling's blood;
 And whilst the tear paternal dimm'd his eye,
 The fragrant wood his trembling hands apply;
 The knife he drew, his victim son he-view'd,
 Uprais'd his hand—an awful pause ensu'd!

Sudden from highest heav'n th' Eternal cried,
 " Forbear!—thy son is giv'n—thy faith is try'd."
 Forth from the thickets of the adjoining wood
 Sprung a young lamb, near where the patriarch
 stood;
 Thus sacrific'd, the grateful man again
 Join'd his retinue on Moriah's plain;
 And journeying on to Bethel's verdant land,
 He pass'd the fane of Moloch's impious band,
 In Hinnom's vale the lofty walls surround
 The burning Tophet's ever-barren ground,
 Where direful demons spread their raven wing,
 And boding dins along the valley ring;
 With art infernal, and with impious wile,
 The wizard priests the heathen states beguile;
 Deluded parents, with rich presents bear,
 To Moloch's shrine, the children of their care,
 To avert each evil from their household band,
 And gain th' applause and honours of the land:
 The youths and damsels to high fame aspire,
 And to their God they pass thro' Tophet's fire.

Grateful to him to whom our pow'rs belong,
 Thus spake the father, as he pass'd along:—
 “What wondrous mercy first my footsteps led
 Prone to the path to wander 'mid the dead!
 What heav'nly voice my doubtful soul beguiles,
 To seek my greatest pleasure from thy smiles!
 Why was not I in error's maze betray'd,
 Unconscious, thankless, to thy arm of aid!
 But thou inclin'd me to attend thy voice,
 And in thy favour only I rejoice.
 Whilst nations round are heedless of thy sway,
 And vengeance waits to sweep thy foes away,
 Thy sparing mercy call'd my thoughts above
 The cares of mortals for immortal love.”

The musing sage, as thro' the vale he trod,
 Lowly express'd his gratitude to God;
 On Mamre's plain th' Almighty's high command
 Assign'd him favour, 'mid the heathen band,
 Where Abram dwelt—one son his God bestows,
 From whom the chosen tribes of Israel rose.

At length in peace the princely patriarch dies,
 And pious Isaac clos'd his father's eyes.

His spouse Rebecca, of his kindred line,
 ('Tis heav'n's award the virtuous hearts incline)
 Blest with two sons; the youngest favour found,
 And Jacob grew with Isaac's blessing crown'd.
 From Padan with his wives, by God's command,
 Jacob return'd to Canaan's verdant land,
 Where long he had remain'd; whilst flocks increase,
 Rewards of toil, he seeks to dwell in peace.

A seraph from th' Eternal's council flew,
 O'er Jabbok's ford he met the wand'rer's view;
 An habitant of earth, in semblance, stood,
 And first address'd him as a stranger wou'd:
 His voice to heav'nly melody was strung,
 When flow'd the sacred promise from his tongue:
 "Israel thou shalt be call'd, and thy increase
 This name shall bear, and sway the land of peace."
 And as he spake, fair and more fair he grew,
 In radiance blaz'd, and vanish'd from his view.
 The trembling shadows of the midnight hour
 Fled at the splendour of Almighty pow'r;
 Swift as the seraph reach'd his native day,
 The florid morn shot forth her herald ray;

Whilst grateful Israel hastes, at God's command,
From Padan-Aram to fair Canaan's land.

Two wives he boasts, not both belov'd the same,
For Rachel's beauty won the voice of fame.
On the least lov'd six sons her God bestows,
Impatient Rachel, childless, mourn'd her woes,
Nor mourn'd in vain. A son at length is giv'n,
A lovely boy, the boon of bounteous heav'n.
"Another yet," th' unhappy mother cries,
Another comes, and shrouds in death her eyes:
Her babes, regretted with her dying breath,
She wept, and yielded to relentless death.

O'er Rachel's grave (afflicted Israel's woe)
The solemn dirge and floods of sorrow flow:
The vale of Ephrath her remains confin'd,
But ne'er eras'd her image from his mind.

The orphan infants claim'd their father's care,
The eldest lov'd, and favour'd, as most fair.
The pious Joseph, Israel's darling boy,
Child of his rev'rend age, and source of joy;
Not Bilhah's tawny sons like him could charm,
Nor Zilpah's children vie in beauty's form.

The fire, with fond delight and partial eye,
 Cloth'd him in costly robes of various die.
 The gift paternal wing'd pale envy's dart,
 Which rankl'd in each murm'ring brother's heart.

Whilst they for toil with manly strength are
 strung,

Their bow and arrows o'er their shoulders hung,
 A fearless band; the only care they know,
 To keep their father's flock from savage foe;
 To salutary exercise is given
 A greater relish for the gifts of heaven;
 Unus'd to toils, the gentle Joseph grew—
 The praise of ev'ry virtue was his due.

Whilst balmy sleep her pinions spread,
 Celestial guards surround his bed;
 Nocturnal scenes his thoughts employ,
 Illusive fear, or visionary joy:

For God had said from his empyreal throne,
 "I rais'd this youth to make my wonders known."

At his behest obedient Gabriel flew,
 And future honours open'd on his view.

The youth unfolds the visions of his bed,
 The artless tale fraternal hatred bred:
 With looks of innocence he thus began,
 Whilst angry whispers 'mongst his brethren ran:
 " Behold! I dreamt, as thro' yon field I stray'd,
 Which late the reaper's hand with sheaves o'erlaid,
 My amber sheaf with golden honours crown'd,
 Uprear'd and stood, whilst prostrate your's sur-
 round.

The sun, which glides thro' yon pellucid sky,
 Did not his homage to myself deny;
 The moon and stars, which gleam along the glade,
 Mov'd downwards, and obeisance lowly made."

He smil'd and ceas'd—wrath kindled in each
 breast,

When Simeon spake, and thus the youth address:
 "'Tis well!—thy fire protects thy daring tongue,
 Else on this arrow's point it should be hung;
 Shalt thou o'er us a petty tyrant sway,
 Whilst we must bear the burdens of the day?"
 Old Israel's sons thus angry murmur'd round;
 Rage fill'd each breast, each face with envy frown'd.

So where those passions triumph in the mind,
Fell mischief reigns, and brooks no law to bind.

The richest pastures Sechem yields,

Where countless flocks repair;

And Hebron's vale and verdant fields

Fed Jacob's fleecy care.

The thrifty sons their father's flock attend,

To Dothan's hill their wand'ring footsteps bend.

In Jacob's breast a sudden thought awoke,

And thus his son the rev'rend sage bespoke:—

“Thy envious brethren will thy youth detest,

If thou with me so long prefer thy rest;

Then haste, my son, where with their flocks they
fray,

Speed thy return, and of their welfare say.”

For Joseph once before his brethren fought,

And to his sire an ill report had brought;

Yet not with aggravation to inspire

Resentment keen, and light domestic fire,

For early taught to peaceful love inclin'd,

No strife disturbs his well-instructed mind.

The coat of various dyes the fav'rite wore,
 A parent's gift, and clasp'd with gold before;
 A graceful zone with careless art around
 Of saffron hue, his slender body bound.

The youth, obedient, cheerfully arose,
 And on his way with active speed he goes;
 Soon as the soaring lark salutes the day,
 He wander'd lonely with the dawning ray.
 At length inform'd to find he hastes along,
 Beguiling tedious time with tuneful song,
 To Dothan's hill, where aromatic bloom
 With richest sweets the tepid gales perfume.
 As o'er the plains his airy footsteps speed,
 They spied the youth, and on his death agreed;
 To nature's ties obdurate—lo! they prove
 Envy triumphant o'er fraternal love.

Reuben, relenting, thus the men address'd,
 Whilst tender pity sway'd his gen'rous breast,
 (So Providence divine, by latent springs,
 His wise design to great perfection brings)
 " Forbear the act!—no violent hand shall spill
 The blood of innocence, and Joseph kill:

But if ye, callous to the ties of man,
 The deed pursue, observe another plan;
 Nor slay him here, but in the distant wild,
 In some deep pit immure the fated child."
 Thus spake the man, intentive on deceit,
 To save the lad, and ill designs defeat.
 The youth drew nigh, suspecting nought of hate,
 Embrac'd them round, nor saw impending fate;
 They seize the stripling without more delay,
 And lead him onward, trembling with dismay.
 Vainly his sire he calls, with fear oppress'd,
 Vainly he claims the pity of their breast—
 "My father dear! behold your Joseph dies!—
 I, whom you love! Oh! could you hear my cries!"
 The thought of sudden death his strength disarms,
 He lifeless sunk, and fainted in their arms:
 Whilst envy, rage, and spite, each tongue employ,
 Into the pit they cast the dreaming boy.

His vest and zone, of various dyes, they tore
 From off his back, and colour'd it in gore!
 Deaf to his anguish, harden'd to his moan,
 They mock his tears, and scoff at every groan.

Swift from the view the gentle Reuben fled,
 Whilst all his soul with inward sorrows bled;
 Waiting in hope, till day declines, to save
 His guiltless brother from an early grave.

Sol's golden beams now gild the western sky,
 When spicy Gilead's gallant sons drew nigh;
 From Midian's land the fragrant caravan
 The Hebrew shepherds ken'd, and thus began:
 (From Heber sprung, whose valiant deeds high
 fame

Had sung of old, and memoriz'd his name;
 So shall each virtuous act on record shine,
 And each descendant boast their sire divine)
 "If we, my friends, the murd'rous plan essay,
 Vengeance may find us on some future day;—
 Him (if agreed) we to this vagrant tribe
 Will sell, and by their price we will abide."

Swift from the pit th' affrighted youth they
 drew,
 And twenty pieces each adjudg'd as due:
 The harden'd Midians, sons of Gilead, bore
 The captive boy where Nile's swift torrents roar,

To Egypt's land, whose fanes of ancient date
 Bespoke the strength and grandeur of the state;
 Mizraim, the third from Noah's scatter'd race,
 With mighty warriors coloniz'd the place,
 From Babel's tow'r dispers'd;—the bands repair
 To seek a fruitful rest, and found it there.

The stately structures grow beneath their hand,
 And tow'ring Pathro ornaments the land;
 Zoan's fair city Aven-Tanis rise,
 And lofty pyramids salute the skies;
 Next the Assyrian kings—the Memphians boast
 Their ancient nation sprung from Mizraim's host.

Reuben return'd, nor knew the strange event,
 Quick to the pit with hasty steps he went;
 No brother found—he thus exclaim'd in woe,
 “The child is not!—and I!—where shall I go!
 Not to my father can I e'er return,
 To see his sorrows, and to hear him mourn.”
 Unable to contain, with grief oppress'd,
 The rising anger struggled in his breast.
 Him to appease their artful tongues prevail,
 And Reuben ceas'd his brother to bewail;

A story form'd to hide the dire affray,
 From Dothan's hill they drove their flock away,
 Left righteous Heav'n reveal the barb'rous deed,
 Black terrors rising, check'd their homeward speed.
 So, tremb'ling with affright, the murd'rer flies,
 Or, shudd'ring, hides him from the threat'ning
 skies.

The garment rent, and bath'd in purple gore,
 Vent'rous, at length, they to their father bore.
 With well-feign'd grief they stood before their fire,
 And fraudulent tears bespake the tidings dire—
 "If this be Joseph's coat, this have we found
 Where beasts of prey in dang'rous herds abound."
 The fainting patriarch, struck with trembling
 dread,

O'er his white locks the flying ashes shed;
 Around his quiv'ring limbs the sackcloth hung,
 And agonizing woe seal'd up his tongue.
 O'erwhelm'd with sorrow, words refus'd their aid,
 Prostrate on earth the wretched father laid;
 Long time remembrance kind her pow'rs refrain,
 And fleeting sense escapes an hour of pain.

Reviving to the light, he inward bled,
 His hoary locks he tore from off his head:
 At length the kindly tear began to flow,
 With broken accents, audible in woe—
 “ My son!—my son!—for ever lost to me!
 For thee I liv’d—oh, had I died for thee!
 High Heav’n is just—but I am dead to joy—
 Some beast of prey devours my darling boy!
 Lo! my grey head, which God with sorrow bends,
 No more sees good—but to the grave descends.”
 His weeping daughters comfort gave in vain,
 He mourn’d his son, whilst life and light were
 pain.

(So grieves the fire whose partial mind
 Is to one fav’rite child inclin’d;
 In each his offspring hatred reigns,
 Hatred no human law restrains;
 And in his fam’ly wild contentions roll,
 And drown the nobler passions of the soul;
 Whilst some dire fate awaits, inwrapt in gloom,
 To strike the parent in the fav’rite’s doom.)

Now deep remorse assaults each shepherd's
breast,

Glooms on the brow, and robs of needful rest;
The beauteous Tamar saw her consort's grief,
And soothing softness yielded some relief;
When cheering sleep would seal their careful eyes,
Strangers to peace, they start with dread surprize!
The injur'd boy, and vengeance in array,
Employ their fancy till the dawn of day;
When springing from their thorny bed, they bear
Distracting terrors, and o'erwhelming care:
The secret treach'ry preys on every mind—
The fire alone to Heav'n's high will resign'd.



CANTO II.

TO Pharoah's court, where commerce spreads
her store,

The thrifty men the sorrowing captive bore;
Chief of the monarch's guards Potiphar stands,
Who bought the youth of Midian's trading bands;
Pleas'd with his slave, (his heart by merit won)
His friendly hand exalts him as his son.
Beneath a master's gen'rous care he grew,
Faithful in trust, and to his int'rest true;
A costly robe his manly person grac'd,
And linen fine his youthful shoulders brac'd:
Graceful as waving palms on Elim's shore,
The Israelite the badge of honour wore.

His master's household his commands obey,
Absent—to him he delegates the sway;

His mistress pleas'd, on him her choice bestows,
 And in her breast the lawless passion glows.
 The fair Egyptian strove with ev'ry art,
 (Yet vainly strove) to win the Hebrew's heart;
 His pious mind in pensive sorrow lost,
 Heedless of love, each day her wishes cost:
 No sense of honour could her words restrain,
 At length she spoke—but spoke to him in vain.
 Then thus th' astonish'd youth address'd the dame:
 “Are you so lost to sense of modest shame!
 Behold, my master's goodness knows no bound,
 All that is his beneath my care is found;
 Shall I, ungrateful to his bounteous dole,
 Sin against God!—let virtue sway thy soul.”
 Thus said, th' indignant blush his features fire,
 He turn'd his head, and hasted to retire.
 This scorn from him her guilty breast alarms,
 And deep revenge her unchaste bosom warms.
 Swift came her servants, as she wept aloud,
 And vengeance dire her tongue vindictive vow'd;
 “Behold! your lord within this house has brought
 A Hebrew slave, with sinful folly fraught.”

Soon as her lord return'd, she thus begun:
(Shamelefs, whilst falshood fway'd her fraudulent
tongue)

“ As here alone, with daring fpeech and bold,
Thy faithlefs flave to me his love has told!”
She fpoke:—refentment furious fir'd his foul,
And in his breast convulfive paffions roll!
Then burft his wrath, like ocean's troubled wave,
Whofe frothy fhores the rifing billows lave.
The perfecuted youth they quickly fought,
And to the prifon of the guilty brought;
Refign'd and meek, no murm'ring paffions flow,
He flood the fhock, nor funk beneath his woe.
The keeper faw the gentle Hebrew's truth,
That fome bright fpirit influenc'd his youth;
And o'er the captive band he gave him fway,
To bring them food, or quell the angry fray.
Our fates are woven by th' Almighty's hand,
We fink or rife, upheld by his command!

Oft in a profp'rous fhining day,
The virtues wither and decay,

But by some frequent show'rs of woe
 Wisdom and sage experience grow;
 So, when with threat'ning frowns the rolling sky,
 The springing roots and thirsty soil supply,
 Forth from the heav'ns the sun of mercy warms,
 All nature smiles, and fresher beauty charms.

Th' Egyptian monarch, like his great compeers,
 Capricious frowns—his frown his action steers;
 Within the prison where the Hebrew lay,
 Two wretches in a dungeon pin'd away;
 Each of an high estate was dispossess'd,
 And felt the stroke, with weighty sorrow prest.
 Each nightly vision to their mournful view
 Paints the lost good, and flatters something new;
 Beneath young Joseph's tender care they fed,
 He plac'd the guard around their wretched bed,
 Whilst ever wakeful genii hover near,
 And phantom scenes to fleeting thoughts appear.

When florid morn arose in mantling light,
 Swift fled the dusky shadow of the night;
 The radiant skies, dress'd in full beauty, shed
 Refreshing influence; oozing from his bed,

In blazing glory 'ray'd, the sun upbounds
 With vigour fresh, to run his daily rounds;
 Uprise the busy world to schemes anew,
 And sons of earth their golden gains pursue:
 Night's curtains rais'd, the stage of life unveil'd,
 Dark vice stalks forth, in virtue's mask conceal'd;
 And mortals march the transient scen'ry o'er,
 Then sudden drop, and act their part no more.

The Hebrew early on his charge attends,
 His pensive step toward the dungeon bends;
 Upon the pris'ner's brows nocturnal fears
 Hung sadd'ning—they revive when he appears.
 Like lucid morn to weary trav'ller's sight,
 Long wand'ring, wilder'd midst the gloom of
 night;

With looks aghast, with hope and fear full fraught,
 Each hasted to unfold his slumb'ring thought;
 Expectant passions in each bosom roll'd,
 And thus to Joseph they their visions told:—

“ As butler to my king, his cup I bore,
 He gave command mine office to restore,

(For lo! my enemies with rancour fir'd,
 Confin'd me here, and 'gainst my life conspir'd)
 Methought a vine in blooming beauty grew,
 And from it's stalk three branches shot anew;
 The buds appear'd, and blossom'd to my sight,
 And soon the clust'ring grapes became full ripe;
 The fruit I prefs'd, and to the royal hand
 The cup I bore, amid the feastful band:
 Then let thy wisdom heav'n's behest relate,
 And what its purpose for my future fate;
 For well I know thy God can give thee light,
 In strange illusions of oblivious night."

Then Joseph thus replied: (with wisdom blest'd,
 To soothe the mis'ries of the boding breast)
 "Again shalt thou the royal board attend,
 And bear the wine amid the festive band.
 Ere the third sun has reach'd the western skies,
 To greater honours may my friend arise;
 Make mention then of me, with gen'rous mind,
 And let my kindness teach thee to be kind.
 Aid from thy hand, should prosp'rous days disclose,
 Is due return to mitigate my woes.

For I was fold from out the Hebrew land,
Stol'n from my aged father's tender hand."

Then wept the youth;—the gushing sorrows flow,
And fond remembrance 'whelms his soul in woe!

His fellow next his vision did relate,
And begg'd the Hebrew to disclose his fate:
"Methought three baskets on my head I bore,
For Pharoah's banquet, crown'd with choicest
store;

(For I chief baker was of all the land,
Till cast in prison by my king's command)
From out the topmost basket on my head,
As on I went, a flock of birds were fed:
Disclose this:—if my dream propitious be,
And Apis smile, I will remember thee;
For Apis, monarch of the Argive race,
Wifest of kings in science did surpass,
T' impart his knowledge to the neighb'ring land,
His vessels bore him to the Memphian strand,
And dying there, th' important good he done
For herds and tillage, they his praises sung;

T' immortalize him, every honour paid
 In oxen shape, with flow'ry chaplets 'ray'd;
 When to his shrine the selfish priests repair,
 The lib'ral presents of the king they bear;
 Deeming their fates dependant on his nod,
 They raise the altars to their senseless god."

Whilst in the Hebrew's breast compassion flows,
 Reluctant he relates approaching woes:—

"Thou wilt be hung!—Heav'n's mercy, ever nigh,
 Preserve thy life, and turn the fatal die."

Thus said, belief implicit hope denies,
 As Joseph next his friendly balm applies;
 And heav'nward pointing with uplifted hand,
 In deep attention, round the pris'ners stand.

"My friend, though life be thine, yet this to
 know,

Will lighten care, and soften ev'ry woe:—

An awful God, who, infinitely wise,

Created earth, and form'd the ample skies,

Who o'er the realms of night illum'd the day,

And down the east whose morning banners play;

Whose potent hand the pendant earth upholds,
 And o'er its surface nature's charms unfolds;
 Forth from its bed the race of mortals form'd,
 And with his breath the vital fluid warm'd;
 To Him alone it appertains to raise
 Th' immortal mind, to understand his ways,
 With patience to sustain our transient life,
 Or to dismiss us from these scenes of strife.
 To glory in this God is man's chief end,
 To know his will, and to his pleasure bend;
 To Him, thy Maker, grateful homage pay,
 Who dwells surrounded with eternal day,
 Nor yield to idols an Almighty's due—
 The righteous heav'ns thy various actions view!
 Within his pow'r remains thy fate, thy breath,
 To raise thee up, or sink thee down to death;
 Created for the skies, the bliss be thine
 To know this God, and in his presence shine!"
 This said, th' afflicted man assents to truth,
 Whilst thoughtful cares oppress'd the Hebrew
 youth;

Like the chaste drops of beamy morn,
Soft pity's tears the cheeks adorn,
Steal to the anxious breast of woe—
The only balm a wretch can know;
Sweet sympathy her healing pow'rs impart,
To soothe the tumults of the swelling heart.



CANTO III.

ON the third fun th' Egyptian monarch paid
 His birth-day dues in royal robes array'd;
 The boards with nectar'd bev'rage crown'd,
 Invite the courtiers to furround;
 The golden bowls contain the wine,
 Prefs'd from the vineyard's choicest vine;
 Chief of the butlers, from the prison brought,
 Gave to his sov'reign's hand the usual draught;
 But the chief baker met his diff'rent fate,
 And fell a prey to foe's vindictive hate.
 The happier butler soon forgot the youth,
 Ungrateful to his kindness, worth, and truth!
 Whilst two long years their fleeting circuits roll,
 Distressful cares subdue the Hebrew's soul.

So fortune's favours steel th' ignoble mind,
 Which, when in trouble, is to others kind;
 But, when prosperity uprears her crest,
 She stands forgetful of a friend distrest.
 All righteous Heav'n the children of his love
 In sorrow's fruitful clime their virtues prove;
 As stands the mountain lofty to the eye,
 The lowly vales enjoy the fatt'ning sky.

To mortal view portentous visions rise,
 To point their thoughts to reason and the skies:
 Thus Pharoah dream'd:—As by a river's side
 He gazing stood, whilst radiant waters glide,
 Seven kine well-favour'd, rose from the flood in
 view,

And cropt the herbage as around it grew:
 Soon after, from the river's flowing tide,
 Seven other kine, ill-favour'd, lean, he 'spied:
 Then as he gaz'd, in slumbers soft embow'r'd,
 The seven lean kine the fat ones swift devour'd.
 Then Pharoah 'woke; but slept, and dreamt again
 One stalk did seven good ears of corn sustain;

Then sprang seven more, ill-favour'd of its kind,
Cut off, and blasted by the eastern wind.

He look'd again; when, wond'rous to relate!

The seven lean ears the full ones quickly ate.

He 'woke—and lo! the visions of his bed

Troubled his spirit, and confus'd his head.

Soon as the morn in dawning radiance rose,

He told these visions as presaging woes;

Call'd the wise men—sent for his magi near—

He tells his dreams, and all attend to hear:

None could interpret, none the meaning shew,

And in his soul huge weights of horror grew.

So shook the Persian king with mighty woes,

When on the wall the scroll portentous rose.

The conscious butler audience swift demands,

Before his king the trembling ingrate stands;

And knowing well his monarch's gen'rous mind

Loath'd an ungrateful heart to vice inclin'd;

Then bending low, with scarce uplifted eye,

Down stole a tear, repentant rose a sigh!

Encourag'd by his king, the fearful man

With hesitation thus his tale began:—

"I and thy baker once, as guilty found,
 Alone, unfriended, were in prison bound;
 We both one night in dreams our fates beheld,
 And both our hearts with anxious sorrows swell'd;
 An Israelite, from Mamre's verdant plains,
 Confin'd within the prison still remains;
 Wife in his counsels, good in all his ways,
 Nor aught of evil ever stain'd his days:
 Our dreams, interpreted with truth, he told,
 And thine, oh! king, he also will unfold.
 The baker hung, our dreams with fate agree,
 And I'm restor'd to what I was with thee."

"And so," rejoin'd the king, with keen disdain,
 "Thou, now in comfort, leavest him in pain;
 If rightly here my visions he relate,
 To him I will consign thy mortal fate."
 A guard decreed, the butler leads the way,
 And found the man to ceaseless woes a prey;
 In menial offices employ'd to bring
 The fresh'ning water from a distant spring,
 And on the hearth to pile the crackling wood,
 Or watch the vessels of the boiling food:

When ev'ning frees him from the keeper's nod,
He pours his soul an offering to his God.

Now at the furnace, for the pris'ners food,
To stir when need, resign'd to care he stood;
Soon as the butler met his eager view,
Swift to embrace the old acquaintance flew:

"Ah, me! my friend!" the wond'ring Joseph
cried,

"Long here immur'd, unfriended have I sigh'd!
Why deign at last—or rather, not before,
To mitigate the woes my bosom bore."

'Thou favour'd of the gods!' the man reply'd,

'Propitious pardon my ungrateful pride;

For well I am aware, in great import,

Thy wisdom shines to-day before the court,

And to thy hand my fate the king consign'd,

A stranger to thy great forgiving mind;

The royal presence then with me attend,

Forget thy sufferings, and my cause befriend.'

The pious Joseph lifts his heart to heav'n,
Till guards approach'd, and shew'd the mandate
giv'n;

He swift prepar'd—with change of raiment on,
 Bright in his eyes celestial wisdom shone.
 In decent garb he knelt before the throne,
 His graceful port the heart of Pharoah won;
 The courtiers round survey him o'er and o'er,
 With modest confidence their gaze he bore:
 The dreams prophetic they to him unfold,
 Who, prescient, thus th' interpretation told:—
 “Seven fatted kine seven years of plenty show,
 And great increase preludes impending woe;
 From seven lean kine appear seven barren years,
 And her lank head, lo! haggard famine rears.
 Seven full-ear'd corns, seven lean, the same will
 show;

Seven years of plenty, seven of fearful woe.
 Then may the king some man of worth ordain,
 To save the produce, and dispense the grain;
 Let him be wise, to know the pow'r on high,
 Lest with dire famine all thy people die.
 The fifth great increase of each fruitful year
 Purchase, and save with ev'ry needful care;

When famine, with attendant mis'ries rise,
 Thou canst to neighb'ring states afford supplies;
 Treasures from foreign courts to Pharoah's hand,
 For needful food, enrich the Egyptian land."

He said, and ceas'd: whilst silent every tongue,
 At length the dome with loud applauses rung!
 From crimes imputed innocent he rose,
 Yet nobly scorn'd to be reveng'd on foes.

"Thou art the man!" th' astonish'd king replies,
 "I will exalt thee, wisest of the wise;
 Thou shalt be ruler next to me thy king,
 To thee my people shall their tribute bring;
 This ring (thy wisdom's prize) shall grace thy
 hand,

And make thee honour'd o'er th' Egyptian land.
 With curious art enwrought, the linen fine,
 The purple robe and royal vest be thine;
 A chain of gold shall grace thy neck around,
 And fame's loud trumpet shall thy worth resound."
 The monarch spake:—the vest and chain he wore,
 And trumpets sound his fame from shore to shore.

So beams the sun with golden ray,
 When mists dispel before the day;
 So fly the shadows of the night
 Before the pure ethereal light.

From deep abasement wisdom's son arose,
 Prepar'd for honours by a train of woes;
 Whilst watchful angels, ever on the wing,
 With loud acclaims bid heav'n's high concave
 ring.

Now from a dungeon to a palace rais'd,
 His former foes the princely Hebrew prais'd:
 So when precarious fortune draws the sigh,
 A shoal of friends, with fraudulent pity fly;
 But should the changing prospects smile again,
 Around her standard flock the guileful train.
 Vers'd in the Memphian tongue the man display'd
 High wisdom, and his sov'reign's will obey'd;
 Consulted on the welfare of the state,
 He, prescient, oft averts some threat'ning fate;
 The king, each day more pleas'd, new honours
 show'rs,

And with his fav'rite pass'd the social hours.

Asenath in exalted beauty shone,
 Daughter of Potiphera, priest of On;
 For, favour'd by the queen, the royal dome
 The fire and damsel made their constant home.
 Her charms superior, with a soul refin'd,
 Attract the Hebrew's elevated mind:
 In converse oft they pass the fleeting hour,
 In fragrant shade, or royal woodbine bow'r.
 Often the pious Israelite essay'd
 To turn to truth and heav'n the list'ning maid;
 She deep attentive o'er the accents hung
 Of soft persuasion, flowing from his tongue,
 Whilst eager he, with animated eye,
 Points to her view the wonders of the sky,
 Th' Almighty's works—ne'er ceasing to extol
 The living God, and one eternal all.

The damsel heard, and from the joyful throng
 She turn'd, nor join'd the dance, or chearful song.
 The penetrating court the cause survey'd,
 And thus his sov'reign to the Hebrew said:
 (For affable the monarch's gen'rous heart
 All comfort to the careful minds impart;

Beneath his smile auspicious, wisdom shines,
His people's weal he to it's guide consigns.)

"Behold, I've rais'd thee to the highest state!

Whate'er is wanting to compleat thy fate

Declare thou—nor from my presence go,

Till what thy soul can wish—my hands bestow.

Can any which beneath my dome reside

To thee be yielded as a worthy bride?

Asenath, loveliest of the female train,

Is offer'd to thy love—say if in vain?"

Prostrate the Hebrew fell—the king rejoin'd,

And kindly urg'd him to disclose his mind:

"My sov'reign's will for ever be obey'd,

Thy slave presumes t' accept the proffer'd maid;

Unworthy of the gift thy hand bestows,

A needy pensioner, and child of woes!"

Thus humbly said, his rising joys compress'd,

Swift to her fire the monarch made request;

The day appointed, all the priests prepare

The shining temple with important care;

The dusty deities, in niches kept,

With solemn mind the priests with besoms swept.

In Pharoah's sacred fane the pious pair
 Bow'd low to heav'n, with fix'd attention there;
 While to the gods around, the princely throng
 Paid homage, and began the nuptial song;
 When loud rejoicings at the king's behest,
 Rang through the realms which royal bounty blest.
 The Hebrew, free from meanness and from pride,
 Attentive to distress, the poor supplied.
 So will each son of worth—the bounteous dole
 Deal gently, and support the drooping soul.

Now thirty summers' suns had pass'd the skies,
 Matur'd his mind, as brighter prospects rise;
 His num'rous servants, at their lord's command,
 Wait the prophetic produce of the land.
 The years of plenty double increase yield,
 And loads of harvest press the burden'd field;
 Taught by the wisdom given from on high,
 What to consume, and future wants supply.
 Thick wav'd the golden corn! earth gives her stores,
 As yellow sands, where boist'rous ocean roars;
 All hands employ'd, the harvest home they bare
 In plenteous heaps, and laid them up with care.

Now to reward his toils a son is giv'n,
 Manasseh nam'd—the boon of bounteous heav'n;
 And ere bleak famine smote the teeming ground,
 Another son bid ev'ry joy abound.
 Then to himself he said, “ My griefs, my pain,
 Since from my father's house I'm blest again,
 God makes me to forget, and I with joy
 Name Ephraim for a second lovely boy:
 Soon as the troubles of the land abate,
 I will at Mamre learn my father's fate.”

The years of plenty fled, the barren foil
 Refus'd reward to labour's hardy toil;
 O'er the wan fields dire famine holds her sway,
 And gloomy night scarce yields the palm to day.
 No more autumnal honours dress the trees,
 Which wanton'd with the aromatic breeze,
 And rushing thro' the filken robe they wore,
 Play'd fingering onward to the sandy shore.
 No more the fields, in lively green array'd,
 Receive in gay attire the blithsome maid,
 Who whilom often on the velvet glebe
 With many a youth would dance adown the mead.

The verdant banks and plains where herds were fed
 Lie wither'd, and the num'rous guests are fled.
 No more, descending from the ecchoing hill,
 The lowing kine the polish'd milk-pails fill;
 Nature, supine, no more her charms renew,
 And gloomy eve withholds prolifick dew.

Deep in the umbrage of a gloomy wood
 The infernal dome to Adrammelech stood,
 Near Bacab's vale the brazen gates inclose
 The spiry fane where Melech's priests repose;
 By Ham's descendants rais'd—dispers'd abroad,
 They rear'd the temple to the monstrous god;
 And leagu'd with hell to seal the angry skies,
 Lest a fresh deluge should again surprize;
 Before whose shrine continual flames ascend,
 And dreadful harpies round the cavern bend.
 The wretched captives taken in the snare,
 The wizards to the flames relentless bear;
 Th' obstrep'rous roar, resounding to the skies,
 And frantic orgies, join the wretch's cries!

Black clouds of curling smoke, a horrid sight!
 Darken the noon, and turn the day to night;
 And Sol's bright ray refuseth to dispel
 The twilight which involves the fiends of hell.
 The blasted trees thick shade the valley round,
 And bones and ashes strew the barren ground;
 Along the beaten track the doleful cries
 And piercing shrieks of harmless babes arise!
 The impious parents, steel'd to tender care,
 To Melech's shrine the infant victims bear,
 T' appease their deity!—Th' affrighted child
 Twines round its parent's neck, with terror wild;
 The monsters seize it for destruction dire,
 With horrid rites they plunge it in the fire!
 O'er hissing flames the forc'er's waving rod,
 And dreadful dins, invoke the heathen god;
 In vain invoke! for woe and famine reign,
 Nor earth nor hell the blasting scourge restrain.

Th' Egyptian land by Joseph's care was fed,
 From day to day, with needful food and bread;
 Famish'd with want, the neighb'ring states resort,
 And humbly crave assistance from the court.

Prefiding o'er his stores of various kind,
 He fold, and gave the poor with bounteous mind;
 Th' ambaffadors their gold and treasures paid,
 And thus in council to each other faid:—
 “ Think ye not, friends, this man of noble worth,
 In faireft femblance to a fon of earth,
 Is fome bright god from the Olympian throne,
 Who makes the wonders of his mercy known?
 Some guardian pow'r from high defcends below,
 To fave the realms, and ward th' impending blow.
 With what humanity and gentle port
 He guides himfelf to all who here refort;
 To rich and poor his godlike mind imparts
 The equal honours to impreff their hearts;
 A mind in mis'ry 'tis enough to know,
 His friendly hand will banifh ev'ry woe.”
 This faid, and each fuffic'd, from court retir'd,
 With wonder, love, and dread refpect inspir'd.

Prebend of his house of various kind;
He lost, and gave the poor with benevolence;
The ambassadors their gold and treasures paid,
And thus in council to each other said—
“Think ye not, friends, this man of nobles worth;
In faith, I judge him a low at best;
Is some bright god from the Olympian throne,
Who makes the wonders of his name known;
Some guardian power from high realms above,
To save the realm, and guard the people from
What what business, and great power;
He guides himself to all who honour him;
To rich and poor he gives his aid;
The royal house to which he gives his aid;
A mind in mine, the power to know;
His friendly hand will help us to know;
This said, and each his own way took;
With new force, and new spirit, they took

CANTO IV.

THAT favour'd land which God for Israel blest,
 In clust'ring vines and blooming verdure drest,
 Where spring pourtrays her lively green,
 And decks with lib'ral hand the scene;
 Hills, dales, and woodlands, charm'd the view,
 Thick crown'd with fruits of various hue;
 Now blasted at the sov'reign thund'rer's nod,
 Beneath the scourges of an angry God.

The aged Jacob, patiently distress'd,
 Yielded to Heav'n, and thus his sons address'd:
 "From Egypt's land, where flows fam'd Nilus'
 tide,
 A courteous stranger to my cares replied:

‘ A fear of note foretold approaching dearth,
 And whilst prolifick from the teeming earth
 The plenteous grain in ample stores preserv’d,
 Enough to spare for famine they reserv’d.’
 Then hear, my sons, your wives and children
 plead,

Myself regardless of this hoary head;
 Since my beloved son, to beasts a prey,
 Was torn from hence, attend me, and obey:
 No time to lose, soon as the dawning day,
 Implore our God to aid you on your way;
 Wisdom and mercy, attributes divine,
 May yet in all those dispensations shine.”

Obedient to their fire, they swift prepare
 For Egypt’s land—thinking to banish care;
 Which, righteous to revenge the direful deed,
 Oft deep corroding, bade their sorrows bleed.
 Soon as Aurora lighted up the day,
 (Their garments brac’d) they ventur’d on the way;
 Ten beasts with heedful steps their masters bore,
 Ten beasts of burden mov’d along before.

Then hasted on the careful shepherd band,
Till gain'd the limits of the Memphian land;
When eve advanc'd, and warn'd approaching
night,

Her shades unfurl'd, and frown'd away the light,
Beneath some hospitable shed they rest,
Till rising morn drives twilight down the west.

At court arriv'd, with honest looks and bold,
For provender and corn they proffer'd gold;
A guide procur'd, they pass the streets along,
Whither, for food, unnumber'd strangers throng.
Enter'd at length, they low obeisance paid,
Nor Joseph knew, in royal robes array'd;
Low to the earth the humble suppliants fall
Before their brother, governor of all!
Amaz'd he stood! and gaz'd them o'er and o'er,
Check'd the swift thought, and speechless wonder
bore;

At cruel wrongs indignant passions rose,
Contending to revenge his num'rous woes;
Again he gaz'd—and rising wrath compress'd,
Whilst tender pity stole upon his breast;

From thought intense, deep reas'ning, Joseph
'woke,

And frowning solemn, thus the men bespoke:—

“ From whence came ye, to view th' Egyptian
shore?

The blasted earth, which yields her fruit no more!
Employ'd by distant realms, to war inclin'd,
To spy the land, as suits your vagrant mind?”

‘ Not so, my lord, (they cried) from Canaan's land
We fled from famine, by our fire's command;
If, as reports declare, we here may find
Supplies for treasure, and reception kind.’

Whilst trembling at the frown which clouds his
face,

They thus resum'd, and hop'd to find his grace:

‘ For we twelve brethren were, our father old,
(Twice threescore years and ten he now has told)
One son is not, for whom he ever grieves,
The other, youngest, with his father lives.’

“ Let him, (the chief reply'd) with you repair,
When next from Canaan to this land you steer;

Meantime, for present reasons of the state,
 Confinement be your temporary fate."
 Then rising from his seat, (emboss'd in gold,
 The tapestry each side the posts enfold)
 He wav'd his hand—the armed bands surround
 Th' astonish'd men, and them in prison bound.
 Till now no sad distress their bosoms crost,
 To heighten terrors for a brother lost;
 But vengeance now pursues the hasty deed,
 And keen afflictions bid repentance bleed.

The interpreters attend the chief's command,
 And wait in prison on the Hebrew band;
 Their master's mind prophetic they display'd,
 Whilst Israel's children heard, and were dismay'd;
 Conscious of guilt, in this they each agreed—
 This prescient lord divines our evil deed!
 Why else should we, if he no ill could know,
 From strangers' rights be thus confin'd in woe.
 ' When first I met his eye, (Zebulon cried)
 He read my soul, and actions past espied!
 Observ'd ye, brethren, how he gaz'd us o'er,
 In silence gaz'd—and what a frown he wore!

He saw us monsters in the shape of men,
And destines us in prison to remain.

He spake:—in sorrow lost, the mournful train
Eager intreat their freedom to regain.

Thrice steer'd the moon, and thrice the blazing
sun,

Thro' yon' bright arch, and thrice the morning
shone;

When pity sway'd the chief's fraternal breast,
And in the ward he thus men address:—

“ Ye sons of Israel, to your fire repair,
And to this land your favour'd brother bear;
Let one of you as hostage still remain,
Till with the youth you here appear again;
Provisions ready wait, and what you need,
For nought from me shall now impede your speed.”
Then to th' attendant guard he stretch'd his hand,
And Simeon chose from out th' affrighted band;
They stand amaz'd!—now burst the smother'd
fighs,

Thus mutt'ring round, as guilty conscience cries:

“ Vengeance on us is come! wide yawns the
grave—

A brother's blood! no righteous God to save!
His weeping anguish, and his struggling fears,
His horrid parting groans, and pleading tears,
We wou'd not hear—now this distress is due;
Our brother dead, the dreadful act we rue.”

Then Reuben spake, with conscience clear of
guile:

‘ Said I not then to you, oh! spare the child!
But ye refus'd:—the crime conspicuous stands,
And God requires our brother at your hands.’

“ Reuben, refrain, reproachful words forbear,
Tho' free from guilt, our punishment you share.”

‘ Not so, (reply'd the man) no cares molest,
To rack my soul, or to disturb my rest:

And shall I grieve to pass beneath the rod
Decreed to mortals by the will of God.

Then here I mark this truth, in conscience clear,
The balm of rectitude repelleth fear.

But ill becomes it of a bosom kind
To add distresses to the woe-fraught mind;

Then let us humbly trust the sov'reign pow'r,
Able to aid in the despairing hour.'

As from each man debating whispers flew,
Joseph his native Hebrew language knew.
Engag'd in converse with the standers by,
Illusive to the search of curious eye,
Yet marking with capacious mind their port,
Th' interpreters their needful wants report.
Their deep repentance for himself distressed,
Awoke his love, and bade resentment rest—
Then, swift retiring from the public mart,
A manly tear restor'd a calmer heart;
And thus resolv'd, whilst softest feelings reign,
Left they, thro' fear, no more return again.

Then forth he came, and thus address the men:
"One of you stay till ye return again,
Laden with stores, your beasts of burden stand,
Return in safety to your native land;
And when ye come again, bear ye the youth—
By this alone I judge your boasted truth."
Wide flew the grating valves—forth issued they
With eager speed, lest ought obstruct their way;

Provided well, old Israel's freighted train
 With weary journeys reach their fire again.
 Him anxious, they with tender haste address,
 To calm the troubles lab'ring in his breast;
 For absent Simeon fears began to rise,
 And all the parent trembles in his eyes.

“ Oh! father, still distress'd! (Issachar cried)
 With best of food thy children are supplied;
 But Simeon safely stays, nor stays to mourn,
 And waits content till we for more return.
 The lord of Egypt, though at first severe,
 At length relax'd, and gave us better cheer;
 And thus requir'd to know from whence we
 came,

Our nation, country, and our father's name:
 Questions which prudence led him to demand,
 Lest foreign spies should lurk amid our band;
 Since countless strangers came from distant shores,
 By famine driv'n, and lur'd by Egypt's stores.
 Thus him we answer'd, and disclos'd our name,
 Our occupation, and from whence we came:

“ We are no spies, one father is our lot—
 Twelve sons he had, but one of us is not.
 One with our fire remains, a fav’rite youth:”
 He swift replied—“ By this I judge your truth;
 Him in your train, when next for Egypt bound,
 Bring with you;—and hereby your truth be found.”
 Then with the sons of trade, a thrifty band,
 You’ve leave to traffic in th’ Egyptian land.”

This said, their sacks untied, when, strange to
 view!

Down fell the gold, for corn to Pharoah due.
 Struck with the sight, they on each other gaze,
 And scarce have power to speak their strange
 amaze!

Yet earnestly and honestly they said,
 That payment for the corn they duly made.
 “ Most sure, (said they) the chief of Egypt’s store
 Will think we stole it back, to purchase more.”

‘ Lov’d as ye are, my sons! (the patriarch cried,
 And as he spake, the tear he strove to hide)
 Lov’d as ye are! I wish the grave your rest,
 Ere such dishonest action stain your breast.

But yet, depending on your words, I grieve,
 I lose my sons, and old and wretched live.
 Thou, my beloved boy—my source of woe!
 And Simeon gone!—now Benjamin must go!
 Lo! all these things against my peace appear'—
 And as he spake, he wip'd the rolling tear.



But perched on your words I grieve
I lost my home and old and wretched live
Thou, my beloved boy - my source of woe
And Simon gone - now Benjamin must go
I cannot think of things against my peace appear
And as he passed, he left the rolling tear
And as he passed, he left the rolling tear

And as he passed, he left the rolling tear
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CANTO V.

DIRE famine spread destructive horrors round,
 Blasted each bloom, and smote the languid ground!
 Their corn consum'd, they, pensively and sad,
 Their fire implor'd to spare the fav'rite lad;
 " Why should we tempt the tedious way in vain,
 Can we our brother's liberty regain?
 Without the boy no corn will he bestow,
 And thy refusal will increase our woe."

Then to his sons the rev'rend patriarch spake :
 ' A present rich of balm and honey take,
 With treasures, and this zone of various die—
 Ye may, perhaps, his friendly favour buy.
 Alas! may I again my sons behold!
 Again in safety Benjamin enfold!

The only hope, and sole belov'd, I have
 Of his dear mother in the peaceful grave.
 Whilst love and fear his struggling soul divide,
 The close embrace the copious sorrows hide.

Soon as unfurl'd the orient streamers play,
 Old Israel's sons prepar'd them for the way;
 Their garments brac'd, one side their scrip they
 hung,

Their bows and arrows o'er their shoulders slung;
 A knotty staff of oak each held in hand,
 And full of care they haste for Egypt's land.
 The fire with eager eyes their distance kenn'd,
 Till down the vale their speedy beasts descend;
 Then prostrate thus his ardent pray'r preferr'd,
 And from his throne Eternal Mercy heard:

"God of my fathers, hear the vow I pay,
 Preserve my sons, and guard their dang'rous way:
 Thy promise cheers my soul!—still let thy care
 Back here in safety all my children bear:
 Then shall our grateful voices reach the skies,
 And holy incense from thine altars rise."

This said—a calm from heav'n pervades his breast,
 Dispell'd each fear, and hush'd his griefs to rest;
 Their wives and infants claim the patriarch's care,
 And youthful gambols tedious time repair.

At length arriv'd where Nile, with furious
 sweep,
 High bounds impetuous o'er the muddy steep;
 The muddy steep in vain confines the tide,
 And thro' the plains the swelling surges glide.
 'Mid the thick rushes where the waters flow,
 Deceitful lurking lies the dang'rous foe;*
 Soon as their glitt'ring eyes descry the prey,
 They shoot voracious to th' unequal fray;
 So springs th' unerring dart, elanc'd afar
 In the deep contest of outrageous war—
 So sudden on their oozy way they sweep,
 And mournful clam'rous o'er the victim weep;
 Devour the quiv'ring vitals—churn the blood!
 Then, bounding high, they plunge beneath the
 flood.

* The Crocodile.

When at JEHOVAH's nod the waves subside,
 And to their bed the boist'rous billows glide,
 The fields and plains in teeming beauties smile,
 With annual flowing of prolific Nile.

Now at the place where foreign crouds resort,
 A guard attends, and Joseph held his court.
 Announc'd, the sons of Israel flow advance,
 And scarce adventure to uplift a glance.
 Judah drew nigh—the youth he held in hand,
 Then prostrate fell the trembling Hebrew band;
 He cast his eye on Benjamin so dear,
 And struggled to conceal the falling tear.
 At length, with melting voice he bids them rise,
 Dismiss'd the croud, and wip'd his humid eyes;
 Then call'd his steward to provide the meat,
 As all the Hebrews at his house should eat.
 He spake—th' obedient steward quickly went,
 And brought them in, with fear and travel spent.

Dubious of ill, within the palace led,
 Thus to the servant in distress they said:
 "Oh, sir! the gold which in your hand we paid,
 Within our sacks with wrong intent was laid;

We know not who presum'd to place it there,
Then let this sum the unknown fault repair."

The steward bade th' interpreters reply,
They had found favour in his master's eye
To feast with him to-day; then to the place
He brought glad Simeon to their fond embrace;
Their brother thus restor'd, they hope the best,
And unto God their fervent prayers address.

Capacious vessels from the cooling spring,
To wash the trav'lers' feet, the servants bring;
And ev'ry hospitable care is shewn,
Whilst they their presents ready made for noon;
When comes the master for refreshment due,
From court to joys domestick, ever new.
With radiant pomp disclos'd, and beamy gold,
The polish'd valves the rooms of state unfold;
Fix'd to the spot unwearied they survey'd
The dazzling glories round the dome display'd.
Th' interpreter his master's fame began,
And greater dread thro' ev'ry bosom ran;
With thoughts of his exalted worth inspir'd,
They wait his view, with expectation fir'd!

Meantime with Simeon questions eager rise,
Scarce time for answers intermix'd with sighs.

Soon as he came, they prostrate met his view,
And paid the reverence to a prophet due;
He bade them rise with—"Is your father well?
Th' old man of whom ye spake—his welfare tell."
His friendly words they answer'd with surprise,
"By sorrows worn, he on his God relies."
His brother's face in mute surprise he ey'd,
His mother's son—and thus at length he cried:—
(Whilst soft affections reign) "Is this the boy
Of whom ye said, 'He is our father's joy?'"
He spake—the keen sensations dimm'd his eye,
He swift retir'd, nor waited for reply.
The fav'rite brother answers his desire,
As nearest semblance of his absent fire;
The strong emotions shook his gen'rous soul,
And down his cheek the tear of pleasure stole.
The polish'd boards with choicest viands crown'd,
The chief appear'd, and plac'd his brethren round;
The eldest first—the next assign'd his place—
Whilst strange amazement rose in ev'ry face!

Thus seated round, according to their age,
 Whilst fear and wonder all their thoughts engage;
 On sep'rate stands was plac'd the Hebrew's bread,
 And Joseph at a diff'rent table fed;
 His friend, his spouse, and children, grac'd his
 board,
 With ev'ry good and needful plenty stor'd,
 The haughty sons of Afric's glowing clime
 To eat with Hebrews deem'd it as a crime;
 Their hands imbrued in oxen's sacred blood,
 They slay the emblems of the Memphian god.
 The sons of earth, as changing as the skies,
 The various gods and modes of faith devise;
 Unnumber'd deities some realms can boast,
 And ev'ry idol a devoted host!
 Whilst the ALMIGHTY sits enthron'd on high,
 And sends his threat'ning thunders down the sky.

Renew'd with strength, they brace their gar-
 ments on,

And bending grateful, hasten to be gone;
 His master's will the steward quick obey'd,
 And on the beasts the weighty burdens laid;

The treasures due, which they to Egypt bore,
 With gen'rous mind his ready hands restore.
 Surpris'd such gifts return'd, their inmost mind,
 Reason'd long time—no cause could be assign'd,
 "Save as a recompence (Issachar cried)
 For prison's cheer, and stranger's rights denied."
 This secret said—their treasures they survey,
 Plac'd safe, to get no damage by the way.



CANTO VI.

To further trial of their truth inclin'd,
He firm resolv'd, with an inventive mind:
Indebted to their hands for all his woes,
He now would pay the long arrear he owes.
Unkind to him, he knew their cruel heart
With Benjamin, perhaps, might joy to part,
He'd therefore try to see if they were bent
To save the lad, and of past ills repent.
Then whisp'ring calls—th' obedient steward rose,
“ In the youth's sack my silver cup dispose;”
His lord's command he hastens to obey,
And sent them onward at the break of day.
Their thanks bestow'd for hospitable feasts,
They drove along with glee their burden'd beasts;

But ere they far had gone in happy mood,
 At Joseph's call his household steward stood;
 "Up, follow after Jacob's sons, and say,
 What have ye done unto my lord to-day?
 His silver cup one of you have purloin'd,
 Returning evil when my lord was kind!"

Then hasted he, observant of command,
 And view'd them journeying on, a jovial band;
 Then thus, when he o'ertook them on the way,
 "Why do ye evil to my lord repay?
 Ye stole the cup from which he drinks his wine,
 What! wot ye not this act he could divine?"
 Old Israel's sons, astonish'd, made reply,
 "The man with whom the cup is found shall die;
 Our God forbid! for did we not restore
 The treasures in our sacks, and proffer'd more;
 Why then should we, as sinful, naught, and bold,
 Steal from my lord his silver or his gold?
 With whomsoever the silver cup is found,
 He dies, and we in slav'ry will be bound."
 Then swift dismounting, each their search begun,
 Whilst strong assertions flow'd from every tongue;

Their sacks untied, not yet the cup is found,
 Indignant quick the youngest's they unbound;
 They loose the string—the weight within gave
 way,

Down fell the cup!—they trembled with dismay;
 No end to woes, their robes they rent thro' shame,
 And harmless Benjamin sustains the blame.

Then back with speed return'd th' astonish'd
 train,

Wide stood the gates t' admit the men again;
 Before their brother's face they prostrate lay,
 And speechless wait what he vouchsafes to say.

Then thus at length—"What, knew ye not that I
 The sinful motive of your hearts could spy?"

Then Judah spake:—"Alas! what can we say!
 We guilty are before thy face to-day;

We cannot clear the thief—he's evil found,
 And we and ours for bondmen must be bound."

"Not so, (replied the chief) your brother—he
 With whom the cup was found, my servant be;
 Not with the guilty shall the guiltless stay,
 But with your stores ye may pursue your way."

‘Oh, thou, my lord, (the trembling man re-
join’d)

Full well I know thy great prophetic mind;
Inur’d to woe, myself requires no meed,
But for my father all my sorrows bleed.
By thy command, and to confirm our truth,
Our fire’s reluctant hand bestow’d the youth;
Myself first pledg’d to see his safe return,
Meanwhile his age with grief and care is worn,
Our father of one fav’rite is bereft,
And of his mother he is only left;
How can I go, and leave my brother here,
And see my father sink in deep despair!
Then, oh! my lord, to my request agree,
Send back the lad, and in his stead take me.’

Judah obsequious waited for reply,
Amaz’d he view’d the tears in Joseph’s eye!
Who speechless stood—long time no words ex-
prest,
The rising tumult lab’ring in his breast.
His servants round he orders to retire,
Then thus—“I’m Joseph! lives my rev’rend fire?”

Then wept aloud—no room for language found,
 But rushing to their arms, embrac'd them round.
 At length again "I'm Joseph!—yea, I'm he—
 Shall I again my aged father see?"
 In vain he spake—th' astonish'd brothers stand
 Like marble monuments in Egypt's land;
 Again he call'd—embrac'd, and wept by turns,
 Whilst shame repentant in their bosom burns.
 Opprest with strange amaze, and scarce alive,
 He spake forgiveness, and their souls revive;
 Whilst guiltless Benjamin these wonders view,
 Gaz'd o'er his face, and to his arms he flew.

His noble presence all their bosoms stung,
 And deep remorse for past transactions wrung;
 When, anxious to allay their keen distress,
 His friendly words impassion'd griefs repress:
 "Why thus, my brethren, let your sorrows flow,
 If I forgive, should ye indulge in woe?"
 O'erwhelm'd with gratitude, they silent stand,
 And the news flies to Pharoah's household band;
 For there, adjoining to the regal dome,
 The gen'rous king ordain'd his fav'rite's home.

Then thus again his brethren he bespoke:
 (Aghast they stand, from wonder scarce awoke)
 " Our God in mercy sent me here to save
 Our father's house from an untimely grave;
 Two years are fled since first this barren soil
 Refus'd reward to labour's hardy toil;
 Five more the stubborn glebe no gleaning yields,
 Nor fruitful herbage clothes the gloomy fields—
 Nor lowing kine luxurious browse along
 The flow'ry meads, and luscious herbs among.
 Then haste to Mamre, see our father well,
 Say all you've seen, and of my welfare tell;
 Thus faith thy son, whom mighty men obey,
 Who next th' Egyptian monarch holds his sway,
 Able to aid thee, shall I not employ
 My utmost pow'r to give my parent joy?
 Come hasten down—shall I my fire embrace?
 Shall I again behold my father's face?
 Blest day, indeed!—my soul with pleasure glows,
 Let future joys in store oblit'rate woes.
 Thus say when ye return—Whate'er is thine
 To Egypt bear—all needless things resign;

Ye from all cares and dangers shall repose,
 And what the land affords my hand bestows."
 Now shall you go, and to my father tell
 The train of strange events which me besel;
 Reserving for myself the part untold,
 Ne'er shall my tongue your actions past unfold—
 Be it your task the secret to compress,
 Unknown, oblivious solely in your breast.
 Then round his neck his youthful brother hung,
 Fast fell the tears fraternal transport wrung;
 When waving further converse, as the day
 Declin'd in west, and shot a gloomy ray.

Retiring for his spouse to share the joy,
 His absence in discourse the men employ;
 "'Tis him! (they cried, yet struck with dread
 surprise)

Him, when a stripling, we could once despise;
 This wond'rous dreamer now indeed must sway,
 And 'tis our part to wait and to obey.
 'Tis in his hand to give past deeds their due,
 But mercy is the path he will pursue.

How well behoves it then, each breast to glow
 With gentle pity for a child of woe,
 Nor flight the least of brethren:—should he rise
 In better fate, he may in turn despise.

Asenath ent'ring, with respect profound
 The joyful brethren paid due honours round,
 The infant boys with rising love they view,
 And tender tears the marble floor bedew.
 The dinner o'er, he hastens to the court,
 And to his king he brought the glad report;
 The monarch pleas'd, his gen'rous thoughts im-
 part,

For Joseph reign'd unrivall'd in his heart:
 “ Bestow thy gifts, and speed them on their way,
 Thus to thy aged father bid them say,
 No evil shall thy family betide,
 If in th' Egyptian land thou wilt reside;
 The best our granaries afford is thine,
 Thou shalt be fed with fat, and bread, and wine.
 Send with them waggons, and what else they
 need,

And from my bounty thou bestow the meed.

Behold, this I command, and thou shalt bring

Thy aged father to thy friend and king."

Then bowing low, with gratitude inspir'd,

The son of wisdom from the court retir'd;

Advice bestow'd, he hastes them on their way,

Soon as Aurora usher'd in the day.

Enrich'd with presents from his bounteous hand,

They swift prepare to reach their native land;

Now Israel's sons with careful speed depart,

Whilst joy ran throbbing thro' each wond'ring
heart;

Ten beasts of burden, laden with each good,

Their vests, and presents, and their needful food;

Ten more lagg'd on beneath their weighty store,

Ready provisions for the way they bore;

With provender the waggons roll'd along,

Just to the time of driver's simple song.

Meantime, with cares disastrous worn,

The patriarch waits his sons' return;

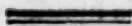
Whilst wakeful woes oppress his eyes,

Commission'd seraphs from the skies,

Descending downward, hover o'er his bed,
 And on his eyes delicious slumbers shed;
 Then to his phantom view his son appears,
 His darling son—and wipes away his tears!
 Or shooting from the heav'ns, in radiant light,
 The fond illusions meet his tearful sight;
 When on her fleecy steeds, the splendent morn,
 Peeps from the East, and all the skies adorn;
 And blazing from the main, with lucid ray,
 The ardent sun begins th' aërial way.



CANTO VII.



THE aged fire ascends the mountain's side,
 With staff in hand, and distant troops descried;
 "What mean those numbers! or my dazzled eyes,
 Bedimm'd with age, deceive, (the patriarch cries)
 My sons approach, or else the Midian bands,
 For slaves or traffic scour the neighb'ring lands."
 When near they drew, the distant hints began,
 Lest sudden conflict 'whelm the aged man;
 Thus cautious they the tale of joy begun,
 And "Joseph lives!" resounds from ev'ry tongue.

As some poor wretch, deep worn with grief
 and cares,

In a lone dungeon scanty pittance shares,
 No pitying friend to cheer his tear-swoln eye,
 The light of heav'n denied, he waits to die;

Sudden a friend appears, to bless his sight
 With pardon, freedom, and celestial light;
 He starts amaz'd! and deems th' illusion vain,
 Which soon will vanish, and renew his pain:—
 So sunk the patriarch's head, with doubts oppress'd,
 The tidings gain no credit in his breast;
 The mem'ry of his son awoke past woe,
 Bent down his frame, and made his sorrows flow.
 His fainting heart convincing words deny,
 Till, rolling on, the waggons met his eye;
 He stood erect—this sight belief impress'd,
 He smote his hands, and rapture fill'd his breast;
 Astonishment and joy seal'd up his tongue,
 Till the deep thought paternal tears had wrung.
 Weeping he stood, whilst fruitless the essay
 In thankful language gratitude to pay,
 Prostrate at length the trembling accents broke,
 And lowly thus to Heav'n the patriarch spoke:
 “ Thanks to my God! I shall embrace my son:
 This will renew my age, in sorrow run;
 On the pure altar flay the fatten'd kine,
 And pour libations from the choicest vine,

Ah! my dear son! for thee my soul shall pay
 Her grateful dues this memorable day.
 When I from Gerar's fertile valley fled,
 Descending angels grac'd my turfy bed;
 As I to Padan-Aram joyless stray'd,
 On Bethel's plain my sacred vows were paid;
 'Twas then my God in covenant agreed
 To rear a chosen nation from my seed,
 To Arbah's verdant vale me safely led,
 On Mamre's hill my choicest oxen bled.
 Unnumber'd blessings all my steps surround,
 This gift restor'd has all those blessings crown'd!
 Joseph, my son, shall I thy face behold?
 To my paternal breast my son enfold?
 Relentless clouds long time portended storms,
 But now dispers'd, the sun of mercy warms!"
 This said—with firmer step the patriarch trod,
 And ev'ry moment lifts his heart to God.

Now each with busy hands and joyful speed
 Prepare to go, from weighty sorrows freed;
 The needful stores and heaps of baggage brac'd,
 Within the waggon safe from damage plac'd;

A band of servants, sturdy, bold, and strong,
 Their masters' flocks and cattle drove along;
 Whilst they attended to the weaker part,
 Their wives and babes, as dearest to their heart.
 The aged sire amid his children smiles,
 And infant prattle tedious time beguiles.

Now on Beersheba's plain resign'd to rest,
 The pious troop in pray'r their God address;
 A cloud of incense from the altars rise,
 With sacred favour to the spacious skies;
 They pitch their tents for safety and repose,
 Their God a friend! around no dreaded foes.
 A radiant stranger, 'ray'd in beamy light,
 Shot thro' the midnight gloom to Israel's sight!
 A soft and awful voice arous'd his fear,
 And "Jacob! Jacob!" vibrates on his ear;
 The favour'd patriarch deem'd celestials nigh,
 And trembling, swift replied, 'Lord! here am I.'
 "I am thy God! (the awful voice began,
 As thro' his frame a chilly shudd'ring ran)
 I am thy God! thy pray'rs, thy deeds ascend,
 And from my heav'n of heav'ns mine ear I bend;

Behold, thy son awaits thy joyful view,
 And needful blessings shall thy steps pursue;
 Thy race from Egypt to fair Canaan's land
 I'll lead, 'mid foes, and wonders of mine hand!"
 God spake, and ceas'd—the patriarch list'ning lay
 With grateful praises till the dawn of day.

Then from Beersheba's plains old Israel rose,
 And journeying cheerful on his way he goes;
 In waggons plac'd their wives, a num'rous throng,
 And slow and sure they wheel'd the troop along.
 To Joseph their arrival to report,
 Swift speeds a message to the eastern court;
 He joyful heard, and eager to embrace,
 Commands his chariot to the destin'd place,
 To meet his sire. Full twenty years had run
 Since Israel's sight rejoic'd his duteous son.

Arriv'd—whilst ardent transports fir'd his breast,
 His self-command the rapid joys compress;
 • When springing from his car—the aged man
 Attempts to rise, but seats himself again.
 His feeble limbs refus'd their needful aid,
 Vain the attempt to rise, again essay'd;

Then swift appearing to his father's view,
 Who gaz'd him o'er, and scarce believ'd it true!
 Before his fire appears his much-lov'd boy,
 Child of his age, source of paternal joy;
 Tumultuous pleasures in their bosoms roll,
 And trembling rapture 'whelms the parent's soul.

“My father!”—“Oh! my son!” the patriarch
 cried,

And on his lips a broken sentence died;
 Reclining to his father's fond embrace,
 The shining tear stole down his manly face;
 Long time they wept, long time ere words begun,
 Around each other's neck they speechless hung;
 The tender scene the thronging fam'ly view,
 Echo'd the sighs, and fell a weeping too.

With gratitude to Heav'n the aged man

Thus to his son expressive joy began:

“Now can I yield in peace my latest sighs,
 Since I have met with thee to close mine eyes;
 No truce to grief since that disastrous day
 When my beloved son was torn away,

Has my sad soul beheld;—a train of woes
My bosom rack'd, and banish'd my repose.

Then thus the son, as o'er his fire reclin'd,
Declar'd th' important council of his mind:
“ Oh! my dear father! much I have to say,
But must refer it to a distant day;
The tale too long will melt my parent's soul,
And now the sun has reach'd the western goal;
But when indulging, o'er the genial fire,
Refections, which thy weighty years require,
Communion shall unfold past num'rous woes,
And present joys to thee I will disclose.
My duty calls me early to the court,
And to my king thy presence I'll report;
Meantime thou follow—from the royal dome
I soon will meet thee joyous at my home.
For thee and thine my well-tim'd suit may gain
Fair Goshen and Rameses' pleasant plain,
Thy flocks and herds may safely there repose,
Well fed to fatten, free from savage foes;
For Egypt's sons thy shepherds will disdain,
And deem thy off'rings to thy God profane;

For daily incense on their altars smoke,
 And senseless oxen sottish priests invoke;
 Their glossy horns are tipt with beamy gold,
 And sparkling ornaments their necks enfold;
 To imag'd gods they sweet libations pour,
 With richest unguents, and the finest flour.
 Thus pass'd the time till twilight grey arose,
 And sweet communion yielded to repose.

Now ev'ning sheds her balmy tear,
 And gems effulgent gild the sphere;
 Fair Luna o'er the mountains rise,
 Whilst peaceful slumbers seal'd their eyes;
 They meet again when lucid morning shone,
 Embraces o'er—he hastens to be gone.

He mounts his car, as round the fam'ly stand,
 The lashing whip resounds beneath the hand;
 Swift roll'd the wheels, the sun remounts the skies,
 And glitters on the chariot as it flies.
 Before his king Joseph his homage paid,
 His manly face in joyful smiles array'd;
 Not long the gladsome tale remain'd untold,
 His guiltless breast no slavish fear controul'd:

“ My fire is come, thy sov'reign pleasure tell,
 If he in Goshen's pleasant land may dwell.”
 The monarch heard, and gracious thus replied,
 ‘ Where'er thou wilt thy kindred may reside;
 If Goshen thou wilt choose, I have decreed
 My cattle too beneath their care shall feed.’
 Then bending grateful from the regal dome,
 He met his kindred welcom'd to his home;
 His spouse presented in her beauty drest,
 The rev'rend sage pronounc'd her Joseph blest;
 The lads embrac'd, he bore them on his knee,
 With “ Could I ever think thy sons to see!”

Five brethren with himself, his fire's support,
 Haste by command to royal Pharoah's court;
 Old age on Joseph leans, the rest attend
 Their leading steps, and to the palace bend.
 Recumbent on his throne of burnish'd gold
 The monarch sat, the guards the valves unfold,
 Their entrance gain'd, a seat awaits the fire,
 The brethren knelt, whilst fear their breasts inspire;
 The aged Israel blest'd him as he sat,
 And paid no cringing honours to his state.

“How old art thou?” th’ attentive monarch
cried,

When thus the venerable fire replied:

‘ The years of my sad pilgrimage have been

Six score and ten, and full of pain and sin;

Six score and ten! evil and few my days,

Sorrows and cares attended all my ways;

I’ve not attain’d to my forefathers’ age,

The days and years of their long pilgrimage.’

A blessing solemn next he thus bestows,

As in his breast a sense of worth arose:

‘ The living God on high, whose potent sway

The glorious hosts of heav’n and earth obey,

On thee and thine the best of blessings shed,

Whilst justice, truth, and honour crown thy head;

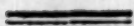
Long may thy reign in mem’ry’s bosom last,

And long thy life without a woe o’ercast.’

Then ceas’d the sage—when rising to retire,

Forth from the presence Joseph leads his fire.

CANTO VIII.



HIS strength renew'd, by due repast and rest,
The patriarch liv'd, and saw his children blest;
To Goshen's land at length the Hebrews speed,
And take possession as the king decreed.
(Ramefes, Pithon's plains of fertile soil,
Yield to th' experienced Hebrews daily toil,
Soon as dire famine fled, they bloom anew,
And varied greens prolific glad the view.)
There with supplies of food by Joseph's care,
His ready servants to the land repair,
Whilst dearth remains to spread pale terror round,
For Israel's need the richest cates abound.
The tardy years the woe-bent souls deplore,
For bounteous nature cheers their fight no more;

No more the springing grafs the meads adorn,
 Nor fragrant sweets perfume the breath of morn;
 No more the purple clufters of the vine
 Supply the monarch's board with plenteous wine;
 No more in blufhing bloom the flow'rets rife,
 And fpread their various charms to fervid fkies:
 Blafled in faded woe the pallid field
 No longer the autumnal honours yield.

Loft to all hope, as fcarce provifion grows,
 The poor and needy fink beneath their woes.
 The famifh'd countries, in excefs of grief,
 Come to the king, and fupplicate relief;
 Each fainting wretch in fable fackcloth lies,
 Unto their gilded gods they lift their cries;
 Yet impotent they ftand in torpid ftate,
 Nor hear their cries, nor can redrefs their fate.
 The fragrant dues on Nebo's altar fmoke,
 Vainly the ritual act their deities invoke;
 Wearied with fruitless prayer, they feize their god,
 And o'er his back they exercife the rod;
 Still deaf to cries, they drag him from his throne,
 Whilft bands of priests attend with hideous groan.

And bellowing in proceſſion, walk the ſpace,
 Mourning the idol funk in deep diſgrace;
 Again replac'd, from uſage moſt ſevere,
 Chidings and pray'rs alternate load the air;
 But when the plague abates, the coſtly ſhrine
 With lib'ral gifts and purple glories ſhine.

Tapena's num'rous children weep for bread,
 Whiſt the fond mother mourns her partner dead;
 Her breathleſs infants on her boſom lie,
 And round her knees her drooping children ſigh;
 Amaz'd, the kindly tear forgets to roll,
 Dire deſperation harrows up her ſoul;
 Life's latent ſpark yields to the tide of woe,
 And bids the vital fluid ceaſe to flow.
 Wild havock ſweeps the land with deathful eye,
 And fell deſtruction lifts a bitter cry.
 The miſer mourns his darling treasures flown,
 And feels diſtreſs he had to others ſhown.
 Speechleſs in grief Baſhema mourns her mate,
 For Dumah drops, and ſhares the gen'ral fate;
 So now the tender boſoms heave the ſigh,
 And bitter tears bedew the aged eye.

From parents' arms, from wives and children torn,
 To bathe in blood ill-fated man is born;
 When deep-ton'd clarions, to commence the war,
 Ring thro' the air, and bear the dread afar,
 What boots the sound of valour to the soul,
 When shades of death and awful horrors roll!
 Thro' India's coast the vengeful angel* flies,
 And groans of mis'ry pierce the frowning skies.
 When fierce Caëcia bids the Baltick roar,
 And foamy billows dash the furgy shore,
 Lost to all hope, th' affrighted crews survey
 With deep despair the wide-devouring sea.

The rushing waters from the hollow deep†
 O'er the Batavian strands destructive sweep;
 Not like the fruitful waters of the Nile,
 Whose annual flowing bids all nature smile.
 But the rude tide of briny ocean bears
 Dire ruin, and o'erloads the land with cares.
 O'er the extended wave the boatman's oars
 Row on from house to house the needful stores.

* Pestilence.

† Inundation in Holland.

No more the social converse glads the soul,
 Or needy vagrants catch the proffer'd dole;
 No more with smoaking tube Mynheer attends
 The street along the wisdom of his friends,
 And dozing o'er the follies of the times,
 Regardless of political designs;
 So the dull clime the duller minds possess,
 And rage of gain o'errules the fordid breast.
 No more the milk-maids, with the produce nice,
 To market skait it o'er the frigid ice;
 Distressful scenes in mingled horrors rise,
 If waters fail, the warring foes surprize.

On Gallia's strands the sanguine rivers flow,
 And awful earthquakes add to gen'ral woe.
 Imperious Etna scatters ruin round,
 And Rome's proud fanes are levell'd with the
 ground.

The guardian pow'rs presiding o'er her fate,
 Directs fair Mercy to the British state;
 On high she sits, and with celestial smile,
 Averts each evil from the favour'd isle.

No pestilence that walks the ev'ning shades,
 Nor direful earthquakes Albion's realm invade;
 No beasts of prey, which roar the midnight round,
 Nor civil war, along her coasts resound;
 Nor famine, with a scourge of tenfold ire,
 Nor Etna shocks her with sulphureous fire:
 But dancing spring, with op'ning chaplets crown'd,
 And soft-ey'd summer glide their annual round;
 Blithe autumn trips with cheerful glee and song,
 O'er furzy hill and forest trees among.
 The reaping trains the yellow harvest bind,
 And join the festive hours with jovial mind;
 Then mournful and reluctant yield the day,
 To dreary winter of despotic sway.

Old Israel dwelt in favour with his God,
 Nor felt the scourge of his avenging rod;
 Steady in sacred promises his trust,
 In midst of evils Heav'n supports the just;
 The daily incense from their altars rise,
 And curling upward mingles with the skies.
 Whilst prostrate round th' adoring Hebrews raise
 Their solemn voices to th' Eternal's praise.

His fam'ly multiplies with great increase,
 And sev'nteen summers God secur'd his peace;
 Seven score and seven he liv'd a patriarch's age,
 Then waits content to quit life's busy stage;
 The messengers the tidings sad report,
 And hasten Joseph from th' Egyptian court.
 In studious words the mournful tale began,
 Left told too sudden, grief o'erwhelm the man;
 He and his sons in haste to Goshen sped,
 Whilst all his soul with inward sorrows bled;
 Around old Jacob's couch his children throng,
 Waiting the prescient blessings from his tongue.

Joseph drew near, and duteous bow'd his head,
 Then stood with tender care beside the bed;
 Soft trod his footsteps o'er the sounding floor,
 The sons with rev'rence waited at the door.
 The dying fire he press'd in silent woe,
 Speechless the copious tears unruly flow;
 Solemn the scene—dread silence round prevail'd,
 Save the deep sighs the sons their fire bewail'd.
 "Lead near thy lads," the sapient father cries,
 Feeble in limbs, and dim in both his eyes;

For worn with age they rais'd his hoary head,
 And brought the children weeping to his bed.
 The prescient patriarch guides his hands, and laid
 The right hand on the youngest Ephraim's head;
 Manasseh, first-born, Jacob put as last,
 And his left hand upon his head he plac'd;
 Then thus, with lifted eyes, the patriarch spoke,
 And from his lips prophetic silence broke:
 "The God before whose face our fathers stood,
 Who fed me all my life with ev'ry good,
 The God of Abr'am bless these lads of thine,
 For nations of their race in fame shall shine."
 'Not so; (replied the chief) upon his head,
 The elder born, thy right hand should be laid:
 Jacob refus'd, and thus in haste replies,
 "Manasseh shall a mighty nation rise,
 But from thy stock, lo! Ephraim, pow'rful grows
 A num'rous host, to crush their daring foes.
 Like as a lion o'er his helpless prey,
 The chosen tribes o'er neigh'bring nations sway;
 Thus I behold to my prophetic eyes
 The distant scenes of distant ages rise.

Soon as I'm dead, my bones to Canaan bear,
That I thy mother's peaceful grave may share.
Behold, I die! but God will be with thine,
His paths are pleasant, and his ways divine!
Moreover, of my portion thou hast part,
As worthy found, and dearest to my heart;
I smote an Am'rite with my sword and bow,
And I his treasures will on thee bestow."

When Israel's blessings to his sons were giv'n,
He sent his dying thoughts before to heav'n;
As round his couch the mournful sorrows rise,
He speaks his last—and to his God he flies!
He slept, and woke in everlasting day,
Borne by celestials on th' ærial way;
So soars the bird uncag'd, to mount the skies,
Rapture and youth new beaming from his eyes!
Thro' filken clouds his bright expanding mind
Shot a farewell to mis'ry left behind.

Ten thousand seraphs met his fight,
And hail'd him to the realms of light;
Soon he began the song of love,
Which tune immortal harps above.

Amazing wonders open'd to his view,
 As thro' th' illimitable space he flew;
 A thousand worlds, with rapid motion strung,
 Whirl'd thro' the mighty void, on nothing hung.
 Unnumber'd blazing planets shot around,
 Swift as a dart, and flam'd with azure ground;
 Extatic cadence rung along the sphere,
 The heav'nly raptures vibrate on his ear:

“ Gentle spirit! haste along,
 Join, oh join our mystic song,
 To this ever blest abode,
 In the presence of our God!
 From the clay of earth unbound,
 In it's storms no longer found;
 Gentle spirit! haste along,
 Join, oh join our mystic song.”

With swifter wing he swept the glowing way,
 Then sprung to regions of immortal day!

When Israel's sons perceiv'd their father dead,
 Aloud they wept, and throng'd around his bed;
 Their garments rent, and audible in woe,
 Long time they mourn, and honours due bestow.

On his lov'd fire the duteous Joseph falls,
 And the dear name of "father" vainly calls;
 "He's gone! he's gone!" with trembling voice
 he cries,

"For ever gone—my rev'rend father dies!"
 He last embrac'd, whilst tears the bed bedew,
 Drawn by his friends, the son of woe withdrew.
 His pensive sons the forrowing Joseph led,
 Whilst sick'ning thought dwelt fondly on the dead.
 The sable sackcloth round his shoulders bound,
 Redundant trailing as he trod the ground.

T' embalm his fire he issues his command,
 And sons of art attend with skilful hand;
 From Gilead's mount they rich ambrosia bear,
 And pow'rful fragrance floats on wings of air;
 From od'rous unguents soft perfumes arise,
 On tepid breezes wafted to the skies;
 Sweet calamus and frankincense disclose
 Unfolding blooms, and rival Sharon's rose;
 The sons of Midian from Arabia's shore
 The aromatic myrrh and cassia bore.

CANTO IX.

NOW flock the neighbours to partake the woe,
 His virtues bade their friendly sorrows flow;
 For with benev'lent hand he dealt the dole,
 And many a wretch his tear of pity stole:
 But hardest hearts to pow'rful custom yield,
 And the wide dome with woe-fraught looks is fill'd.
 Each one in sackcloth 'ray'd, and on his head,
 With plaintive cries, a cloud of ashes shed;
 Beneath a canopy, within the room,
 The corpse is laid, and day-light yields to gloom;
 Save where a glimm'ring taper yields its fire,
 And solemn knells the dread of death inspire.
 The doleful dirge, the tinkling timbrels sound,
 In silent anguish Joseph's tears abound;

Leaning recumbent o'er the lov'd remains,
 His swelling heart the power of speech refrains.
 Absorb'd in sacred grief his brethren stand,
 Conflicting passions all their bosoms rend:
 So grieves the children, who, by acts unkind,
 Cause sorrow to a parent's feeling mind;
 Remorse her keen-felt horrors well bestows
 On those who fill a father's life with woes.

The patriarch's praises, sounding from each
 tongue,
 Add to the scene, and through the mansion rung:
 Full seventy days they sorrow for their sire,
 'Till healing time the calmer thoughts inspire.
 To gain the king's consent he hastes to court,
 And thus his father's last requests report.

"Dread sov'reign, to thy servant's pray'r attend,
 Nor let my griefs intrusive dare offend;
 My aged sire, now dead, did make me swear
 I would his last remains to Canaan bear:
 This I presume to speak—thy pleasure say,
 Thy will my law—I hear but to obey."

The king beney'lent lifts to his request,
 And deign'd t' impart some comfort to his breast:

“The mighty men, and elders of the land,
 Our treasures also, are at thy command;
 Whate’er thou needest to fulfil thy care,
 My chariots, horsemen, to thy aid I spare.”
 Tears spake his thanks—words on his lips expir’d,
 And bowing low, he hastily retir’d.

The filial Joseph, with his trusty friends
 And Israel’s sons, to Canaan’s land ascends;
 Slowly the sable troop pass mournful by,
 The melting anguish trickling from the eye;
 The sapient elders, and a warlike band,
 Attend the scene to Canaan’s distant land.
 By Atad’s threshing-floor they halt to pay
 The last sad honours due to Jacob’s clay.
 The sacred elegy resounds afar,
 And Canaan’s sons the solemn music hear.
 At length they reach Machpelah’s antient tomb,
 Where patriarchs lay immur’d in death’s deep
 gloom;
 There Sarah slept—there Abraham rests his head,
 Isaac—Rebecca—and there Rachel’s bed.

Their steps descending, echoes harsh resound,
 And murm'ring onward as they trod the ground;
 Within the gloomy cave, where reptiles brood,
 The naked walls with dreary dew-damps strew'd,
 The illusive glimm'rings of intruding light
 Display'd new horrors to their sick'ning sight:
 With solemn dread they lay the burden down,
 The deep recesses rethunder'd to the sound;
 Then slow retreating they regain the light,
 And leave the vault to never-ceasing night.

Obsequious rituals due with rev'rence paid,
 Thus to each other Israel's children said:
 " Our father dead, our injur'd brother's hate
 May now pursue us, and decree our fate;
 No tender fire to ward th' impending blow,
 Justice will now severe reward bestow:
 Obtrusive to his mansion let us fly,
 And at his feet in prostrate penance lie.
 Th' assenting brethren hasten to his dome;
 He rose, and bad them welcome to his home:
 Studious to know what made them now distressed,
 To calm the ceaseless sorrows of their breast.

Superior to revenge, he heard their fear,
 And spake forgiveness, with a brother's cheer;
 With friendly words reliev'd their aching heart,
 And promis'd still his goodness to impart.
 Extatic silence gratitude disclos'd,
 Whilst love fraternal ev'ry care compos'd.

Now Israel's sons improve the fertile soil,
 And great increase rewards laborious toil:
 For famine's deathful train had long been fled,
 And needful herbage crown'd earth's fruitful bed.
 Long had the trees their springing blossoms wore,
 And potent Ceres spread her golden store;
 All Goshen wore luxuriant beauty's smile,
 Caus'd by th' o'erflowing of prolific Nile.

When Joseph saw his gen'rous sov'reign dead,
 To joys domestic from the court he fled:
 Threescore and three, the years he liv'd in peace,
 In princely state, and saw his sons increase;
 Beneath his care his children's children bred,
 Upon his knee his grandson's babes were fed:
 So twines the sucker in a fond embrace
 The leafless tree, and crowns its head with grace.

The hand of death now dimm'd his manly eye,
 A herald flies to bid his brethren nigh.
 Swift came the men who had surviv'd the age,
 And listen'd forrowing to the prescient sage;
 Who thus on Israel's sons enforc'd command
 To bear his last remains to Canaan's land:
 For God has sworn he will from Egypt bring
 His chosen race beneath his guardian wing.
 From son to son this my behest declare,
 That I the grave of my dear father share;
 Then, 'till our sons have gain'd the promis'd rest,
 In Goshen's land may you and yours be blest'd.

He panting spake; embrac'd them round, and
 sigh'd—
 Blest'd heaven's high will—then hid his face, and
 died.

Hov'ring o'er the bed of death,
 The angels wait his fleeting breath;
 In the celestial arms of love
 He meets his kindred souls above.
 Their silver pinions sweep the azure sky,
 His raptur'd mind expanding as they fly;

Loud plaudits through th' angelic nations rung,
To highest heav'n they bore the fav'rite son.

Sincere the woe the sons of sorrow wore,
And Israel's race long time their loss deplore;
From shore to shore the mournful tidings fly,
And each plebeian wipes his tearful eye.

Arabian spices—Gilead's balm—they bring,
T' embalm their chief—belov'd as Egypt's king.
His weeping friends his lov'd remains surround,
And from their tongues his well-won praises sound.
They all his acts recount, his worth revise,
A gen'ral friend, and wisest of the wise.
Inform'd by pow'rs divine of future fate,
He sway'd with steady eye the helm of state;
Humility through courtly grandeur shone,
And meekly bore the plaudits wisdom won.
His hand benev'lent gave the poor their food,
And fed his enemies with ev'ry good;
His matchless worth bright fame spread far
abroad,

He liv'd in favour with his king and God.

From head to foot in woven bandage brac'd,
In a rich urn his lov'd remains are plac'd :

Odorous unguents pour'd with pious care,
 The sacred charge his friends to Goshen bear;
 There laid secure, consign'd to Israel's hand,
 'Till they possess their promis'd Canaan's land.

From son to son descends their patron's name,
 Sav'd from oblivion, they recount his fame:
 From son to son the storied wonders told,
 And they again to their's the past unfold.
 Thus, like a vision, ages roll'd along,
 And Hebrew nations in existence sprung:
 So from one root the spreading branches rise,
 Dispense their sweets, and shoot toward the skies.

Meanwhile the race of Ham, with jealous eye,
 The great increase of Israel's tribes espy;
 The hardy shepherds o'er Rameses stray,
 To tend their flocks, and pass the blithsome day.
 Shelah, a gentle youth, from Ashur sprung,
 Upon his reed the charms of Dinah sung;
 A soft-ey'd shepherdess, of Reuben's race,
 And mutual love their pious bosoms grace.

Nichomar saw the maid of Goshen's land,
 And swift demands her of her parent's hand:

" Shall Israel's daughters," thus the fire replied,
 " To heathens and their idols be allied,
 Since the Almighty pow'r our fathers chose,
 How can we prosper, if we join his foes?
 Seven years with me young Shelah, as a son,
 Serv'd faithful, and my only daughter won."
 Nichomar heard—whose princely sway extends
 O'er richest soil that fruitful Nilus tends;
 He heard, and wrathful to his temple goes,
 Intent on mischiefs to create them woes;
 Curs'd the high hand which spread the heav'ns
 abroad,
 And paid the oblations to his fav'rite god.
 The priests, with ready will, the aid invoke
 Of dusty deities involv'd in smoke.
 Now Luna held her brilliant sway,
 And glooms of evening fled away;
 The heav'ns o'erspread with azure hue,
 And nature's scen'ry, charm the view.
 Soon as bright Sol again ascends the skies,
 Assembled all the elders and the wife;

The altar rear'd, each side the parties stand,
 The victims for the sacrifice at hand;
 The cov'nant drawn—surrounded with her
 friends,

The bride appears, and Shelah swift attends;
 Her trailing robe the friendly damsels bore,
 A purple zone around her waist she wore;
 A bright tiara on her temples shone,
 And from her ears the sparkling pendants hung;
 A garland grac'd the Hebrew's head around,
 Which Dinah's hand with blue together bound;
 Each side advanc'd—her father led her on,
 And yields her hand with joy to Ashur's son.
 The cov'nant seal'd in presence of the crowd,
 Lowly to heav'n the pious people bow'd;
 The incense smokes, they bless the happy pair,
 And to the festive dome they all repair.

Nichomar, in the council of the state,
 Thus pleads for Israel a severer fate:
 " Behold those aliens with presuming pride,
 Our nation's worship, and our laws, deride;

And shall those slaves in ease and triumph spend
 Their vagrant lives, and Egypt's sons offend?
 Decree your will, and let an armed band
 This people awe, and dwell in Goshen's land."
 He said—and each in council soon agreed,
 And to the land th' Egyptian forces speed.
 Nichomar still on latent mischief bent—
 Death cuts him off, and frustrates his intent.

So rules the Sov'reign of the skies,
 When daring pow'rs of darkness rise;
 His eye pervades the secret thought,
 And brings the evil schemes to naught.

When nations prosper, 'tis the smiles of God;
 And dread destruction waits his wrathful nod:
 His pow'r o'errules events by latent springs,
 And ill designs to needful purpose brings:
 Not from the dust, the troubles of the land
 Arise by chance, but his all-potent hand
 In viewless guise leads on a troop of woes,
 He, joy and victory, or distress, bestows.
 Then let BRITANNIA bow before his throne,
 And his bright attribute of mercy own:

May truth and equity her sceptre guide,
 And o'er her councils wisdom's sons preside.
 Still may she reign a queen,* and foes in vain
 Assault her rocks, or her strong bulwarks gain.

* Amid the nations.

END OF VOL. I.

